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Thursday, December 13, 2007

Scout donates gifts to 143 local orphans

By Art McQueen
Herald Post Staff

Nicholas Deans, a member of Troop 29 in Heidelberg, has five years left to make his biggest step as a Boy Scout – to organize a community service project and earn the rank of Eagle. Then he saw a need in the local community that couldn't wait.

In a massive effort over the last five weeks, Nicholas, 13, dedicated his Eagle project to providing presents for three local orphanages. The sports equipment, toys, stuffed animals and stockings of candy represent more than \$3,600 in donations from community members.

The directors of the St. Paulusheim orphanage in Ziegelhausen, Luise-Scheppler-Heim in Handshuhsheim and Institut für Heilpädagogik und Erziehungs Hilfe in Schlierbach received notice of the gifts in a ceremony at the Holiday Magic festivities on Patrick Henry Village Friday. Delivery to the orphanages will take place Monday.

Two months earlier, Nicholas had been thinking hard about holiday cheer. "I wanted to help someone close to us," he said.

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IMPROVING SECURITY



Staatliches Hochbauamt Heidelberg

Construction on the new, state-of-the-art access control point, which will replace the old "Burger King Gate," is scheduled to begin in January. The project is expected to be completed in October.

Construction to begin on new PHV gate in January

By Dave Melancon
Herald-Post Staff

Residents and visitors to Patrick Henry Village will have to endure minor traffic delays while work is underway to build a new, state-of-the-art security access control point to replace the makeshift "Burger King Gate" on the Grasweg road.

The two-phase project is scheduled

to begin in late January and is expected to be completed in October, said Klaus Roth, Heidelberg Directorate of Public Works chief project engineer.

"Patrick Henry Village is a huge installation, and we currently have one of the most insufficient ACPs out there. This project will be a great

See GATE, Page 15

PROJECT details

The gate project is a major undertaking and involves more than:

- ♦4,000 square meters of asphalt
- ♦4,300 cubic meters of earth
- ♦680 square meters of sidewalks and bike paths
- ♦235 meters of drainage ducts
- ♦30 street lights
- ♦23 trees and 1,600 shrubs



Sgt. Daniel D. Blottenberger

Sgt. Michael Ullerich, 127th Military Police Company, hands out toys to kids at the Haswah market.

MPs drive insurgents from Iraqi town

By Sgt. Daniel D. Blottenberger
18th MP Brigade Public Affairs

ISKANDARIYAH, Iraq – For members of U.S. Army Europe's 127th Military Police Company, mission success in Iskandariyah can be measured by the success of the local Haswah Market.

"Markets are the best way to measure success in Iskandariyah," said 1st Lt. Nathan Diaz, a platoon leader for the company's "Wolfpack" platoon.

"Sunnis feel safe enough to come back to the markets to shop and sell their products. Insur-

gents drove out Sunnis in the Iskandariyah area and now Sunnis are coming back. Six months ago you would not see this," Diaz said.

Six months ago the 127th – part of USAREUR's 18th MP Brigade based in Mannheim, but currently attached to the Fort Hood, Texas, 720th MP Battalion here – was battling insurgents in the area daily. The MPs and a local infantry company kept watch over a battalion-sized battle space for more than eight months.

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LSS saves hospital
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COMMENTARY

Help yourself – relieve holiday stress

By Heather Robinson
USAG Kaiserslautern

The holiday season is here. While many people find it an exciting time of year, some experience stress.

Too much stress can lead to loss of sleep, appetite, difficulty focusing, headaches, stomach aches and problems in relationships both at home and on the job.

Stress relief can be found by setting regular sleep patterns with limited light and noise, eating balanced light meals, regular exercise and avoiding alcohol, caffeine and nicotine at least three hours before bedtime.

One of the leading causes of stress is “not having enough time.” To avoid this, plan ahead and leave plenty of time to get things done. Nicely set boundaries with others. It is OK to say “no” to invitations or special holiday projects and make time for yourself and your family.

Delegate to family members and co-workers and make a “to-do” list. Crossing off completed items will give you a sense of accomplishment. The “to-do” list will also prevent spending excessively by planning ahead for the number of gifts and how much is in your budget to spend. At the end of the holiday, the money and time left over can be spent on a nice massage, dinner with family or friends or relaxing in any manner you choose.

Choices and attitude are powerful. Educate yourself about the choices you are making and how they will impact you, your family and your stress level. If you have limited alternatives, reframe how you think about the particular event and look for the silver lining. You still have the choice of talking yourself into being distressed and miserable or making the best of the situation. When all else fails, look up, breathe, count to 10 and then move on.

Finally, lend a helping hand to others in need. Often when we look to help others we discover just how blessed we are. The warm feeling that comes from others by sharing the holiday, an event, offering assistance during a time of need or just dropping a toy in the gift box at the Post Exchange might be enough to provide all the stress relief you need this holiday season.

For more information on how to manage stress and have a safe holiday, call the U.S. Army Garrison Kaiserslautern’s Employee Assistance Program at DSN 486-1710.

COMMENTARY

Take a break!

Stopping for just a few minutes can make you more productive, energetic

By Kelly L. Forys
U.S. Army Center for
Health Promotion &
Preventive Medicine

Have you ever come home after a day of work feeling completely exhausted? Have you ever thought that taking a break at work helped you to be more productive?

The good news is that it does!

Taking breaks actually makes you more productive and can provide you with more energy at the end of the day.

Taking breaks away from your computer and job tasks can enhance concentration, boost energy, reduce stress and improve mood.

Many of us have been programmed by our family members, friends and the western work ethic to believe that “working hard” means “working long hours with no breaks.”

Soldiers and civilians alike often feel guilty for taking breaks and fear they will be perceived as wasting time.

Not taking breaks has negative effects. People may turn to caffeine, junk food, sugar, nicotine or drugs to keep going when their bodies are telling them to stop.

The key to maintaining optimal productivity is to take breaks to prevent negative ef-

Top 5 reasons you should take a break:

- 1 You give your body a rest from the unnatural postures that develop while sitting at the computer
- 2 You develop relationships with your coworkers that can benefit you both personally and professionally
- 3 You will be more focused on your work when you return from a break
- 4 It fosters creativity
- 5 You will feel better at the end of the day and have energy to do the activities that you enjoy

fects; however, if you have difficulty concentrating, feel your eyes straining, develop a headache or become fidgety, your body and mind are telling you that a break is overdue.

Some of us wear our hard work like a badge of honor. We brag when we work through lunch, stay late at work, forfeit our leave, and

take our laptops and cell phones with us on the rare occasion that we do take a vacation.

We need to get back in touch with our natural patterns of activity and rest. As babies and small children, our bodies were programmed to take breaks, usually in the form of naps, after long hours of playing.

Work schedules of the past had built-in mid-morning and mid-afternoon breaks. As our society has increased the use of advanced technology, we have also increased our ability to be in touch at all times.

The ability to take work everywhere and never miss a phone call has reduced the amount of time we spend away from work tasks and has decreased the amount of time we spend relaxing and having fun.

Workday breaks can be as simple as walking to the other end of the office building; standing up from your chair and stretching your arms, neck and shoulders; or chatting with a co-worker in the fresh air.

Work breaks can be effective with as little as three minutes away from the job every 90 minutes to two hours.

So pat yourself on the back for the work you do, and take a break!

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Staff retraces historical route

By Dave Melancon
Herald-Post Staff

BÜTGENBACH, Belgium — Mass formations of German armored vehicles and infantry were quietly gathering along the border with Belgium and Luxembourg preparing for Nazi Germany's last major offensive of World War II.

The Ardennes Offensive, more popularly known as the Battle of Bulge, would begin Dec. 16, 1944. The Germans called their operation "Watch on the Rhine."

Sixty-three years later, 45 U.S. Army Garrison Heidelberg leaders and staff members retraced the route of the 6th Panzer Army's thrust into Belgium to see where Soldiers of the 1st U.S. Army, which included V Corps, thwarted Hitler's plan to split the allied advance into Germany and capture the port of Antwerp, Belgium.

Along the Bulge's North Shoulder battlefields, the staff learned about acts of great courage and heroism. They also learned of acts of great cruelty and barbarism, explained historian Will Cavanaugh, guide for the two-day staff ride.

"Remember that these people were just people. Some were good, some were better than others," said Col. Robert Ulses, USAG Heidelberg commander, during the first day's studies. "These people were running huge organizations."

Cavanaugh, who has led staff rides since 1986, said he learned about the battle from his mother, who lived in the area during the attack and from personal interviews with U.S. and German veterans. "These are real people we are talking about, not some Hollywood B.S.," he said.

Kampfgruppe Peiper

The staff ride's first day concentrated on the assault route followed by Kampfgruppe (combat team) Peiper, led by Waffen-SS, Lt. Col. Joachim Peiper, a former adjutant to Heinrich Himmler and the youngest regimental commander in the German Army.

Peiper's column was ordered to 1st SS Panzer Division Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler, a part of the Sixth SS Panzer Army, which was assigned to capture and overrun U.S. positions with the objective of capturing the



Dave Melancon

Members of the U.S. Army Garrison Heidelberg staff ride walk along a string of "dragon's teeth" anti-tank barriers erected by the German Army along the border with Belgium.

port city of Antwerp.

The Sixth SS, one of three German armies taking part of the offensive, was designated the northernmost attack force, with the offensive's primary objective of capturing Antwerp entrusted to it.

The center formation consisted of the Fifth Panzer Army with orders to capture Brussels via Bastogne and St. Vith, Belgium. The German Seventh Army spearheaded the attack through Luxembourg.

Peiper's column slammed into Belgium during the early morning of Dec. 16, surprising the U.S. defenders, Cavanaugh said. As word of the attack spread, Peiper's tank and halftracks encountered stiff resistance from U.S. Soldiers of the 99th Infantry Division. Peiper was forced to change routes several times because of roadblocks and blown bridges.

Combat engineers, tank destroyer teams and the heroic actions of individual Soldiers and small units frequently thwarted Peiper's advance.

As Peiper's 15-mile long column wound its way over the narrow and twisting farm roads, several of his halftracks charged over open ground near a crossroads near the village of Baugnez Dec. 17 and encountered a 13-vehicle convoy made up of elements of Battery B, 285th Field Artillery Observation Battalion. After a brief firefight, 84 U.S. Soldiers were rounded up and shot.

That incident became known as the "Malmédy Massacre," and word of the atrocity spread through the U.S. lines and stiffened the Americans' resolve. Elements of the 82nd Infantry Division (Airborne) halted Peiper's advance at the town of Stavelot.

Running low on fuel and ammunition, Peiper pulled back to the town of La Gleize to await a resupply column. Realizing that the relief column would never arrive, Peiper ordered his men to destroy their tanks, halftracks and other vehicles and returned to German lines Dec. 23, five days after starting his assault.

The Watch ends

Cavanaugh explained how stiff resistance by the 1st "Big Red One," 2nd "Warrior" and 99th "Battle Babies" Infantry divisions helped stem the Germans' advance and bring an end to the "Watch on the Rhine."

Well-dug in U.S. formations along the "International Road" and Elsenborn Ridge, forced the Germans to commit and sacrifice many of their infantrymen and expose their armored formations to withering artillery fire, Cavanaugh said.

Soldiers of the 2nd Infantry Division would earn more Medals of Honor than any other U.S. unit during the fight, and the "Manchus" of the 1st Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment fighting at the Rocherath Baracken crossroads saved the entire 1st Army from being overrun, Cavanaugh said.

Malmédy Massacre

During the opening hours of the Battle of the Bulge, elements of Battery B, 285th Field Artillery Observation Battalion, 30th Infantry Division were driving from their forward lines in Germany to the town of St. Vith, Belgium, to support the 7th Armored Division. Dec. 17, 1944.

That afternoon, 13 vehicles from the 26-vehicle convoy drove into the leading tank and halftrack formations of the 1st SS Panzer Regiment at a crossroad near the town of Baugnez, Belgium, according to the 30th Infantry's Web site.

The out-gunned U.S. artillerymen were quickly overcome by the overwhelming German forces of "Kampfgruppe (combat team) Peiper" under the command of Waffen SS Lt. Col. Joachim Peiper, a former adjutant to Heinrich Himmler.

"Within five minutes the battle was over. The Americans, armed with nothing more than pistols and rifles, didn't stand a chance," wrote Hans Wijers, on the division's history page.

When the troops saw the wave of German halftracks charging through a field next to the roadway, many of the artillerymen abandoned their vehicles and attempted to take cover in a roadside ditch.

The surviving U.S. Soldiers were herded together in an adjacent snow-covered field and then machine gunned down by their captors, said historian Will Cavanaugh during a staff ride conducted for members of the U.S. Army Garrison Heidelberg leaders Dec. 5.

After fighting in the area subsided, Quartermaster Corps mortuary Soldiers found 84 U.S. Soldiers killed in what is now known as the "Malmédy Massacre," he explained. Many military historians consider the incident as the worst single atrocity against U.S. prisoners of war during World War II.

"A number of surviving U.S. Soldiers were shot in the back of the head," Wijers said. "In spite of this, a number of them played dead, survived the massacre and lived to tell their story."

"It was, without a doubt, a war crime," Cavanaugh said. "The guys who committed it pretty much got off scot free."

One of the survivors of the Malmédy Massacre, Ted Paluch and several other survivors are meeting once again at the Baugnez crossroads 63 years later to remember their fallen comrades and to help open the "Baugnez '44 Historical Center," a new visitor's center and museum, Dec. 17.

"I thought it was interesting to do something constructive at this site because of what happened here," said Matthew Steffens, whose family is building the museum a few yards from the massacre site.

Speaking through a translator, Steffens said it has taken his family about a year to build the museum, create display cases to house artifacts from obtained from survivors and collectors.

"For years there has been nothing here," Steffens said. "It is important to preserve the memory of the Soldiers who died here. People should be reminded of the cost of war."



Yank Magazine

COMMUNITYnews

Herald-Post Holiday Schedule

The Dec. 20 issue of the Herald-Post will be the last issue of this year. The first issue of 2008 will be Jan. 10. The deadline for submissions is Dec. 13 for the last issue of this year and Jan. 3 for the first issue of the new year.

Heidelberg Tax Relief Office Has New Location

The Tax Relief Office has moved to the entryway of the Village Pavilion on Patrick Henry Village.

Phony IRS E-mails

The Internal Revenue Service sent out a recent release concerning e-mails claiming to originate from the IRS. The U.S. Embassy has posted this information online and is reminding Americans to be cautious of suspicious e-mails. http://germany.usembassy.gov/irs_warn.html.

Christmas Trees

The Heidelberg and Mannheim area Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts and Venturing Crew will sell Christmas trees at the Heidelberg and Mannheim commissaries' parking lots through Dec. 22. Hours are Monday-Friday, 6-9 p.m. and Saturday-Sunday, 11 a.m.-8 p.m.

Scholarship Opportunity

The Commissary Scholarship for Military Children program is now accepting applications for up to \$1,500 scholarship at each commissary location. Applications can be picked up at the commissary or found online at www.militaryscholar.org. Deadline is Feb. 20.

UMUC Europe Registration

University of Maryland University College Europe registration for online courses has begun and will continue through Jan. 30.

Registration for on-site courses is Jan. 7-18, with a variety of course options at each of the 70 sites throughout Europe, the Middle East and Africa. For a list of courses leading to a certificate or associate's, bachelor's or master's degree, students may visit UMUC Europe online at www.ed.umuc.edu or their local education center. In addition to tuition benefits and financial support services available for UMUC students, a special textbook rebate will be offered to new and returning students in the new year.

Attention Job Seekers

The Mannheim Community Job Fair is set for Jan. 26 at the Ben Franklin Village Sports Arena. The last job fair hosted more than 500 job seekers and 30 organizations.

Companies advertise openings; universities and colleges provide educational opportunities; and military recruiters help with present career opportunities. If you are looking for full-time, part-time or intern work, bring your resume and get started with your career. Civilian 0621-730-3101.



Sieg Heppner

Sgt. Maj. Javiar Otero, Master Sgt. Troy Vinson, Sgt. 1st Class Abraham Cruz and Sgt. 1st Class Jose Rivera are honored during a retirement ceremony in Schuh Theater Dec. 5.

Mannheim honors 96 years of service

USAG Mannheim

More than 95 years of military service were celebrated in Schuh Theater Dec. 5 at a retirement ceremony honoring four Mannheim Soldiers.

Col. Mark D. Baines, deputy commander, 5th Signal Command, honored Sgt. Maj. Javiar Otero, Master Sgt. Troy Vinson, Sgt. 1st Class Abraham Cruz and Sgt. 1st Class Jose Rivera for serving their country.

Otero served as the Europe Region visual information manager. After 30 years of military service, he will continue to serve as a civilian employee for U.S. Army Europe's signal section, Visual Information Services Europe.

Vinson will retire in May from his position as NCOIC of the Supply Division in 5th Signal Command, a position he's held for the past five years.

During that time, he also served an eight-month tour as logistics section sergeant major for 5th Signal Command. He will retire with his family to Lawton, Okla.

Cruz will retire in February with more than 21 years of service from his present position as senior installer and team chief for the Installation Branch of operations, 5th Signal Command.

During his career, he was selected as NCO of the year while assigned to 72nd Signal Battalion and as a member of the Communications Support Team with the U.S. Secret Service during the 2000 presidential campaign.

Rivera is retiring with almost 22 years of service from his current contractor liaison position with 44th Signal Battalion. Until May, Rivera will continue to supervise 10 contractors who are responsible for the Left Behind Equipment Hub.

Kaiserslautern hosts winter safety day

by Christine June
USAG Kaiserslautern

Don Breton's motto is "safety has no price," and those words were put into action Dec. 5 at the U.S. Army Garrison Kaiserslautern's Winter Safety Day at the auto skills center on Pulaski Barracks.

More than 150 drivers found out whether or not their vehicles were safe to drive and ready for the winter at this free, first-of-its-kind event in the garrison.

"We found problems with rear struts, batteries, electrical and braking systems, headlights, belts and leaks," said Donald Breton, Pulaski Auto Skills manager. "These types of problems could leave you stranded out on the road, late at night during the winter, and our goal and purpose was to try and avoid that situation for our patrons."

How this was done was by free car inspections, taking anywhere between 20 to 30 minutes to conduct. Created by Breton, inspection sheets were so detailed, ranging from window-shield wipers to lifting vehicles up to check underneath for any safety concerns.

"It's pretty detailed," said Staff Sgt. Jonathan Vinson, from the garrison's chaplain's office, who was there with his wife getting both of their cars inspected. "They checked all the major things, and even made sure we had ice scrapers in our cars, which are very important these days."

Inspections like this in the states could cost about \$80 to \$100, Breton said.

"I think it will help people keep their cars running

"We take a hit on the profit margins, but again, safety has no price."

-Donald Breton
Pulaski Auto Skills Manager

better and hopefully, if I have any problems, I can take care of it," said Billie Passmore, whose husband is in the Army and currently on a 15-month deployment in Iraq.

Once a safety problem was identified, patrons were not left without answers or avenues on how to get their cars fixed. "We provided as much advice and assistance as possible like where the best place is here to get it fix or Web sites to order parts," Breton said.

Planning ahead for this event, Breton and his staff made sure that generally-needed items such as window-shield wipers, first aid kits and warning triangles were stocked and ready for retail.

Due to this success, Breton is anticipating this program taking place twice a year here to winterize vehicles and in the summer to prepare for vacations and road trips.

"I think it's a great service for the community," he said. "We take a hit on the profit margins, but again, safety has no price."

Implementing change

Longtime Heidelberg resident has witnessed Army-wide changes that started right here

By Art McQueen
Herald-Post Staff

U.S. Army Garrison Heidelberg has long been the testing ground for many programs and services now used Army-wide.

Child development centers, the Community Activities Registration and Education fair, services like Speedy Lube and the Kids' Zone, Morale, Welfare and Recreation expositions and casual dining through national chain restaurants in overseas communities are just a few of the many ideas proven viable here.

Carol Ferguson has lived and worked in Heidelberg for more than 27 years, serving the incarnations of the garrison in a variety of community service roles.

One of the first ideas Ferguson had was to change the child-care paradigm from private organization child care to a government operation in the early 1980s.

Before that time, the Officers' Wives Club ran a child care center in Mark Twain Village, and there were others around the community, she said.

"Most spouses stayed at home then; this wasn't really child development, it was child care. They dropped their children off to go shopping, play tennis, go on a day trip or whatever," Ferguson said. "Then the world changed, and children needed to be in a place that did more than just babysitting."

Accomplishing this required her to justify new positions and create job descriptions. She also secured funding for four child development centers to serve the community.

Ferguson also changed things as the first civilian Army Community Service officer in Europe in 1983. She created the annual CARE fair, now a standard in many communities, to educate and inform new residents about community activities. She also created the annual volunteer recognition ceremony.

Later, as Family Support Division chief, Ferguson hit upon the idea of co-locating



"We have been the most profitable garrison in Europe since I have been here, and that profit goes right back into those facilities. You don't go into a place here and see a worn carpet; we reinvest every dime."

-Carol Ferguson
Director of Community Activities

family support assets like ACS, Child Development Services and Youth Services to provide one-stop operations and share resources and ideas.

Times change, and as director of Community Activities, Ferguson found herself with money-losing facilities that were at cross-purposes.

The days of rank-restricted, dues-funded clubs were over, she said, and different morale programs were fighting each other for the same customers. "The problem wasn't even Heidelberg competing with Mannheim, but Heidelberg with Heidelberg."

"The Noncommissioned Officers' Club and Officers' Club were competing with each other for meals and conference business," she said. "Each held bazaars, they both had bars, and neither one was doing very well."

In rank-heavy Heidelberg, selling the idea of doing away with the officers' club was a difficult task, Ferguson said.

"What we presented to the four-star level," Ferguson said, "was that there should be a place—every single night—where you could go to have dinner and it wouldn't be closed because of a special event."

The NCO Club became Lexington's (later T.G.I. Fridays), and the Officers' Club was renamed the Village Pavilion and became the conference and catering center for

all special activities.

Supporting this and other efforts, the garrison was also the first to use a prime vendor program. The bulk purchasing concept—which was later adopted by Department of the Army—enabled a cost savings of 30 percent, Ferguson said. Just as important, restaurant-grade food was made available to customers.

MWR is the only thing in the military that has to make a portion of its own money, she said, "or you don't get new carpet or new furniture, and the staff doesn't get paid."

Her focus on keeping facilities in top condition has kept customers coming back.

"We have been the most profitable garrison in Europe since I have been here," she said, "and that profit goes right back into those facilities. You don't go into a place here and see a worn carpet; we reinvest every dime that comes in."

In the early '90s Ferguson created and ran the MWR Expo, a Europe-wide training and trade show for MWR professionals, which prior to the drawdown of U.S. forces in Europe had 2,000 participants. The idea was recognized as an important step forward, being adopted by Department of the Army a year later.

A number of widely-celebrated MWR ideas were created "in house" and brought to fruition including the Cyber Café, Kids' Zone, Habaneros,

Speedy Lube and Speedy Wash. All of these trendsetting ideas have been adopted elsewhere. The reworking of concepts as times change has been a constant theme in the garrison.

When bowling suffered a downturn in popularity, Ferguson implemented Cosmic Bowling and the creation of party rooms in the space where unused bowling lanes were located. This maximized use of facilities and brought in more varied customers. She added virtual golf to bowling, Kids' Zone games, and constantly upgraded facilities to stay current with customer demands.

Further changes will continue to be felt for years to come as the Village Pavilion hosts the Arts and Crafts Center, Tax Relief Office and Stronghold Fitness Center.

Meanwhile, also on Patrick Henry Village, a new Winger's Bar and Grill and Java Café are in the process of opening, while the Legends Bar is already pulling in customers at the same location. In Kaiserslautern, a Java Café and virtual golf will open, joining the already successful virtual bowling.

Now, after 27 years of working to improve quality of life in Heidelberg, Ferguson is retiring, but what she has left behind will be remembered in daily activities around the garrison and the Army.

New BOSS president aims high

by Christine June
USAG Kaiserslautern

Spec. Joshua Crawford had lots of ideas rolling around in his head. Now, as president of Kaiserslautern's award-winning Better Opportunities for Single Service members program, he can make them reality.

"I want to do more things for single Soldiers—things that will get them out of the barracks," Crawford said.

Upon arriving here less than a year ago, Crawford immediately became his unit's BOSS representative and two months later became the vice president.

"The role of the BOSS president is to be the voice of single Soldiers, and to make sure that voice is out there talking for single Soldiers and doing things for single Soldiers as well as for everybody else involved in the community," said the garrison's Command Sgt. Maj. Pamela Carmouche, who oversees the program.

Ideas that Crawford has for the program range from establishing libraries in the barracks to making it easier for Soldiers to spend their BOSS bucks—earned by doing community service—for outdoor recreation trips.

"He has really good ideas on how to get more people involved and to volunteer," Carmouche said.

Kaiserslautern's BOSS program has garnered the best large installation and event honors for the past two years by the Installation Management Command - Europe.

Founded in 1989, BOSS is a three-pillared organization that helps single and unaccompanied Soldiers with recreation and leisure, community service and well-being issues. The BOSS program in most Army communities stands for Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers, but because of the unique KMC demographics, the name was changed locally to servicemembers around 1997 to encourage Airmen, Marines and Sailors here to take advantage of the same opportunities afforded to Soldiers.

The BOSS office is located in Building 2917 on Pulaski Barracks. For more information on the BOSS program, call DSN 489-7239.

TRANSFORMING

As Darmstadt prepares to close in the coming year, activities and hours throughout the garrison will change

Patriot Inn Hours

Effective immediately, the Patriot Inn has shortened holiday hours. Through Jan. 2, the front desk and VAT office will be open daily 9 a.m.-6 p.m. The office will close from 1 p.m. until 2 p.m. on weekends. New permanent hours, 7 a.m.-10 p.m., will begin Jan. 2.

Bulk Fuel Coupons

Effective Dec. 15, the Property Book Office will no longer offer bulk fuel coupons for issue. Fuel will be issued by the TMP for IFMS vehicles that are dispatched through TMP. All other customers will have to establish bulk fuel issue accounts.

MWR Hours

Effective Jan. 2, MWR facilities will be adjusting hours to provide 100 percent community support throughout the closure process. The facilities affected and new operating hours are as follows:

- Auto Skills Center's and Car Wash: Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 12-5 p.m.
- Fitness Center on Cambrai-Fritsch Kaserne: Monday-Friday, 5:30 a.m.-8 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Library: Sunday-Thursday, 12-5 p.m. Closed Friday and Saturday.
- Multi Crafts Center: Wednesday-Sunday, 12-5 p.m.
- Outdoor Recreation: Tuesday-Friday, 12-6 p.m.
- Philly Joe's: Sunday-Wednesday, 11 a.m.-8 p.m.; Thursday-Saturday, 11 a.m.-9 p.m.
- VAT Office (located at the Patriot Inn): Monday-Sunday, 9 a.m.-6 p.m.

Transformation Web Site

USAG Darmstadt has a new transformation Web page for residents in the community to easily access all transformation-related material in one central location: www.darmstadt.army.mil/closure. Residents are encouraged to visit the site and provide feedback on its content to: SAGDSTPAO@cmty@mail.26asg.army.mil.

Turn In Lawnmowers

To assist with the closure process, Darmstadt's Department of Public Works is asking all residents to turn in lawnmowers this winter. Santa Barbara residents should keep their lawnmowers until they depart from the community, as they will need them in the spring, but have the option to turn in the lawnmowers now, if moving before April 15. DSN 344-7982 or 344-6239.

More Information

For information on transformation changes, visit www.darmstadt.army.mil and click on "Transformation and Closure." Catch transformation announcements Wednesday on 98.7, AFN "The Eagle," at 8:15 a.m.

66th MI asks community to give 'gift of life' this holiday season

Unit to host quarterly blood drive Friday

By Amy Buenning Sturm
USAG Darmstadt

The Soldiers of Darmstadt's 66th Military Intelligence Group are helping to ensure there is enough blood available for the European military community.

The group's Headquarters and Headquarters Company will hold a quarterly blood drive Friday from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. in the Kelley Barracks Fitness Center.

All members of the Darmstadt community are encouraged to participate in the Armed Services Blood Program in Europe event.

"We historically have had difficulty getting blood during the holiday season," said Capt. Philip Bossart, commander of the Armed Services Blood Bank Center – Europe. "Last year our numbers in November and December were cut

in half."

Bossart's goal for Friday's blood drive is 100 units.

Darmstadt's quarterly blood drives historically are the second highest contributing source of blood in U.S. Army Europe, behind Landstuhl itself, according to Mike Peacock, blood donor recruiter for the Landstuhl-based ASBP. He attributes the community's success to group's regular schedule of blood drives.

"We've gotten anywhere from 50-75 units per (Darmstadt) drive," he said. "That can be close to 20 percent of the blood we need for the month."

Not only does 66th MI excel in securing consistency and volume through their blood drive program, but according to Bossart, the headquarters company sets the stan-

dard for all unit-sponsored blood drives.

The blood collection agency will pass on many of HHC's organizing techniques to other units during a series of training workshops scheduled for next year, he said. One tip he learned from HHC is to give every Soldier an opportunity to serve as a primary point of contact.

HHC's top NCO, 1st Sgt. Josh Hancock, said he is determined to avoid a seasonal decrease in blood donations.

Donors can expect to spend 10-30 minutes for the registration and interview process and about 10 minutes actually giving blood.

For the Soldiers of 66th MI and the Armed Services Blood Bank Center, the time is a small price to pay to save the life of a fellow Soldier. After all, as Hancock said, "What can be more valuable than the gift of life?"

5th Signal Command: Protecting the Army's multi-billion dollar investment

By Sgt. Michael J. Taylor
5th Signal Command

SCHWEINFURT—Over the past several years the U.S. Army has invested billions of dollars in computer software, hardware and equipment in order to keep up with the world's ever-changing technology age.

With the growing need for Internet access within the military comes the need to keep military networks, servers and systems safe from viruses, hackers and other underlying dangers that could possibly hinder the safety and well being of U.S. Soldiers and civilians.

Recently, the 5th Signal Command sent an information infrastructure assistance team, or I2AT, to Schweinfurt to lighten the load of cleaning, updating and "wiping" computer systems for nearly 4,000 Soldiers returning from Iraq with the 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division.

"What we do is try to keep the Department of Defense's network secure," said James P. Boeger, I2AT member.

"Software programs in these computers have vulnerabilities where people can hack in from a 'back door' or use other aspects from our software to get on to our

networks," Boeger said.

"What we try to do is close all those doors so people who aren't authorized to get on the network don't get in."

Working long days and sometimes nights the last week and a half of November, the team managed to finish nearly 400 systems before handing to job back over to the brigade's communication section.

Delousing a computer is the process that ensures it is compliant with the policies of a given network.

A few of these steps include updating the antivirus program and making sure other software is updated so it meets the Army standard.

The process of delousing a computer usually takes three to four hours per computer but can take up to several days for one system depending on the condition of the computer.

"Our job is a very important one because if we didn't do it then everything you have on your computer could possibly be disseminated to people who don't need it or who have plans on doing us harm," Boeger said.

"For example, with an e-mail virus, if one computer had a virus and opens the e-mail message, that mes-

REQUESTING help

Units redeploying from Iraq or Afghanistan can request the I2AT's assistance by visiting <https://www.iassure.usareur.army.mil>.

sage could be spread to everybody in the Army both overseas and within the continental U.S.," said Michael E. Coble, information assurance analyst for U.S. Army Europe.

The I2AT travels everywhere within the USAREUR footprint, delousing computers and making sure its systems and network integrity stays uncompromised.

"This is the first time we've done this for units returning from Iraq," Boeger said.

"We ultimately want to implement something so we can do this for every unit that returns back to USAREUR from downrange."

"Every time you log onto your computer on a military network, someone was behind the scenes making sure it's a secure place for you to go," Coble said.

"We are trying to ensure that no one can infiltrate the Army's network and disrupt missions."

Heidelberg hospital trims \$250,000 in supply costs

ERMC Public Affairs

In the Europe Regional Medical Command's first completed black belt Lean Six Sigma project, the Medical Department Activity Heidelberg's surgery and logistics staffs trimmed \$250,000 in annual supply and administrative costs.

"I am very proud of the Soldiers involved," said Col. Kyle D. Campbell, H-MEDDAC commander. "They have shown the true power of Lean and Six Sigma. This power comes from the Soldier and team members at the point of action and provides significant improvements in coordination, communication and understanding."

The two departments realized sub-

stantial savings in a six-month improvement process. The team found three root causes for an excess of supplies.

They realized much of their success by improving the processes they identified: untimely feedback on supply order status, a lack of sustainment training on supply procedures, and a need for monthly reconciliation of supply levels.

They found that by working together, they could better understand each department's needs and cut down on excessive ordering.

By moving a supply specialist out of the logistics section and into the surgery department, they accomplished that.

"Having one of our supply specialists there was tremendous," said Lt. Col. Jose V. Alicea, chief of logistics at the hospital. "We learned a lot and have a better customer focus now on what the surgery department needs."

The team's report has gone forward to the Deputy Under Secretary of the Army Business Transformation and the U.S. Army Medical Command for sharing with other organizations.

The next local challenges will be to sustain the savings realized and to apply the same principles to other departments.

Lt. Col. Andrea Lester, ERMC logistics office who served as the project leader, was in the first wave

of black belt training for ERMC candidates. Different levels of training and experience are awarded martial arts-like belts to show the level of the person's certification. Lester received her certification this week and is the first in ERMC to be certified.

Even though this project took place behind the scenes, it had a direct impact on the quality of patient care.

"Using the Lean Six Sigma process, this team has improved the ordering, stocking and use of medical supplies, which ultimately results in better and more efficient patient care," said Brig. Gen. David A. Rubenstein, ERMC commander and U.S. Army Europe command surgeon.



Thomas Warner

Lance Cpl. Vance Zider, a Marine Corps Reservist and patient at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, twirls a miniature basketball on his fingers during the Harlem Globetrotters' visit Saturday. Watching are 'Trotters head coach Mike "The Saint" St. Julian, left, and Herbert "Flight Time" Lang.

Harlem Globetrotters call time-out

By Thomas Warner LRMC Public Affairs

The Harlem Globetrotters made a stop Saturday at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center as part of their ongoing goodwill tour through Europe.

The world-renowned basketball team spent a few hours touring the hospital's wards, the Medical Transition Detachment for outpatients and then a short time in the hospital's dining facility taking pictures and giving out souvenirs.

"It's sort of like we are bringing 'home' to home," said Globetrotters' coach Mike "The Saint" St. Julian. "It's moving to see these people who serve their country or have been injured while serving. This is a morale builder for us."

The Globetrotters played a game at Baumholder the night before arriving at LRMC, then followed up with a standing-room-only performance at Ramstein's South Side gymnasium.

The team was founded in 1926 by New York promoter Abe Saperstein, who parlayed the remarkable hand-eye coordination of a few skilled basketball players into what is considered by many now to be the most popular sports team in the world.

The squad traveled to perform at SHAPE Headquarters in Belgium and a few more shows before embarking in late December on a six-month tour of the United States.

"It's sad to see people

who've sustained these life-changing injuries, but it's uplifting because you know that these are true heroes," team captain Paul "Showtime" Gaffney said. "This is what's meant by true bravery – what they are asked to do on a day-to-day basis and how they carry out those missions. We all owe a lot to these military heroes."

"They are often injured in ways that will affect them for life, and they are doing it so other people can be free. I think it's amazing."

The Harlem Globetrotters hold annual tryouts and have a roster of 25 players.

The contingent in Europe included some 12 members and was jointly sponsored by Navy Services and Armed Forces Entertainment.

Distance learning brings medical readiness program training easier

ERMC Public Affairs

Soldiers who need to take training in order to qualify to input data to unit medical readiness programs can now do so without leaving their home station.

"We have developed a new strategic approach for teaching new users of the Army's Medical Protection System, which tracks individual and unit medical readiness," said Shirley Bush, U.S. Army Europe MEDPROS readiness coordinator. "The new approach provides training to unit-level operators through distance education."

Commanders can access MEDPROS via the Internet to find the latest status of their unit's medical readiness. Commanders can also actively manage MEDPROS data by having unit MEDPROS clerks.

It is recommended the all USAREUR units have a minimum of two MEDPROS clerks trained to enter Soldiers' medical data.

In the past, units or garrisons would schedule a MEDPROS training team from the Europe Regional Medical Command to travel to the site and conduct the training. Now, the training is available through videoconferencing at 12 locations in Germany, Belgium and Italy.

To schedule training, the unit's training noncommissioned officer can enroll a Soldier online through the Army Training Requirements and Resources System.

After registering, but before attending the training, the Soldier must have a minimum of a security clearance initiated that is verified by the unit security officer. Second, he must complete Parts A-D of the NISA 9R Form and submit it to the fax number listed on the form.

For the NISA 9-R form, visit www.mods.army.mil.

Each command's ATRRS training NCO will have details about local times, dates and other requirements.

For more information on the program, call DSN 371-2430, civilian 06221-172430, or contact Bush by e-mail at shirley.bush@us.army.mil.

CHAPELevents

Heidelberg

Dec. 23 – Christmas Cantata, MTV Chapel, 10 a.m.
Episcopal "Fourth Sunday of Advent", Nachrichten Chapel, 9 a.m.
Dec. 24 – Christmas Mass for Families, MTV Chapel, 5 p.m.
Christmas Mass for Families, PHV Chapel, 5 p.m.
Lutheran Christmas Eve Service, Nachrichten Chapel, 5 p.m.
Episcopal Christmas Eve Service & Buffet, Nachrichten Chapel, 7 p.m.
Christmas Mass, MTV Chapel, 10 p.m.
Dec. 25 – Christmas Mass, PHV Chapel, 10 a.m.
Dec. 31 – New Year's Eve Mass, PHV, 5 p.m.
Jan. 1 – New Year's Day Mass, MTV Chapel, 12:05 p.m.

Mannheim

Dec. 22 – Gospel Christmas Concert, BFV Chapel, 7 p.m.
Dec. 24 – Protestant Christmas Eve Candle Light Service, BFV Chapel, 9 p.m.
Catholic Children's Christmas Eve Mass, BFV Chapel, 7 p.m.
Dec. 25 – Christmas Day Mass, BFV Chapel, 10 a.m.
Dec. 31 – Gospel New Year's Eve Service, BFV Chapel, 10 p.m.
Jan. 1 – Catholic Mass (Holy Day) Solemnity of Mary Mother of God, BFV Chapel, 10 a.m.

Darmstadt

Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve Mass (Holy Day), CFK Chapel, 5 p.m.
Protestant Christmas Eve Service of Light, CFK Chapel, 7 p.m.
Dec. 31 – Gospel Watch Night Service, CFK Chapel, 7 p.m.

Kaiserslautern

Dec. 22 – Seventh Day Adventists Christmas Worship Service, Daenner Chapel, 11 a.m.
Dec. 23 – Christmas Cantata, Landstuhl Chapel, 11 a.m.
Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve Mass, Daenner Chapel, 6:30 p.m.
Protestant Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, Landstuhl Chapel, 7 p.m.
Dec. 25 – Christmas Day Mass, Daenner Chapel, 11:30 a.m.

USAREUR seeks new logo for Seventh Army

As part of the Army's overall transformation, U.S. Army Europe will become Seventh Army. Along with that new designation will be obvious changes.

"We are looking for a new logo to replace the current 'patch, globe and arrow' version," said Lt. Col. Leslie Mehall, USAREUR Commander's Initiatives Group.

Soldiers and civilian employees, including local national employees, assigned to USAREUR and their family members, are eligible to submit designs for consideration.

Participants may enter up to three logo proposals, which must be of original work.

Design rules include:

♦Must contain no more than five colors;

♦Must contain the Seventh Army shoulder sleeve insignia;
♦May contain words;
♦May not contain or be based on any other copyrighted image or logo.

Once the submissions are collected, USAREUR Commander Gen. David McKiernan and Command Sgt. Maj. Iuniasolua Savusa will select the logo that will be used in various ways, such as television spots and command briefing slides, along with being engraved and embroidered on items.

"Become part of Seventh Army history by designing the Seventh Army logo," Mehall said.

For complete details, visit www.hqusareur.army.mil/newlogo.

Army engages families for safety awareness



Karl Weisel

Driving in Europe can be an adventure, especially for new arrivals. Therefore, a mandatory driving safety course has started for supervisors of Soldiers and Army civilian employees.

Supervisors must complete new course

A mandatory driving safety course has started for the supervisors of Soldiers and Army civilian employees.

The Supervisory Driver's Training program – designed for any civilian or military manager of two or more drivers – began throughout Europe in November as part of the Army Traffic Safety Training Program.

Overall, ATSTP consists of six different courses that provide a minimum of six and a half hours of instruction, with Installation Management Command-Europe offering training at garisons in this region.

According to the Army Combat Readiness Center, Soldiers who are not counseled by their supervisors are five times more likely to die in vehicular accidents.

"We created the ATSTP to teach Army warriors to assess driving hazards and to make smart driving deci-

sions," said Brig. Gen John A. Macdonald, IMCOM deputy commander.

As for Supervisory Driver's Training, it is designed to "increase awareness of regulatory responsibilities, to reinforce good driving habits and to create a culture of safety," said Patricia Jackson, a safety and occupational health specialist with IMCOM-Europe.

The training encompasses 60 to 90 minutes of instruction, including a video presentation and discussion sessions.

For more information on ATSTP, such as when and where classes are being held, visit the IMCOM-Europe Web site – www.imcom-europe.army.mil – and click on the Army Traffic Safety Training Program banner located in the upper right.

While the schedule is subject to change, 30-days notice will be given before any class is canceled.

U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center

FORT RUCKER, Ala. – Army officials are empowering family members to take an active role in implementing safety practices to protect their families and loved ones returning home from deployments.

The Army's new Family Engagement Kit raises awareness of the leading indicators in accidents while passing along the "what" and "how" of best practices. Armed with these newly created tools, family members are afforded active involvement in their Soldiers' safety.

The U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center study of accident and associated statistics, indicates when Soldiers return from a deployment or controlled environment, the rigors and oversight provided by leaders is diminished.

During fiscal year 2007, 186 Soldiers died within one year of returning from deployments.

Approximately 30 percent of the deaths occurred within the first 30 days of post-deployment and 63 percent within the first six months. Of the 186 fatalities, 145 involved privately owned vehicles during off-duty hours.

Army safety officials are convinced that oversight, control and structure are beneficial to achieve an accident-free environment.

The USACRC's collective challenge is to formulate tools that target safety and risk management as a "way of life" for application



USACRC

when Soldiers are off duty.

"We know direct engagement with our Soldiers makes a positive difference in their safety," said Brig. Gen. Bill Forrester, director of Army safety and USACRC commander.

"No one knows Soldiers better than their families, and there are few organizations better positioned than families to influence Soldiers to make safer choices and take fewer risks."

The Family Engagement Kit includes six tools for post-deployment best practices.

"Family involvement is essential, so I ask for engagement with your loved one," Forrester said. "With your help, we can better protect our Nation's most precious assets – our Soldiers."

For more information about the Family Engagement Kit, visit the USACRC Web site at <https://crc.army.mil/familyengagement>.

STUDENTvoters

By Carson Levine
Herald-Post Student Intern

The newest generation of potential voters at Heidelberg High School may have to turn to their garrison officials for help registering.

Fortunately, there is a solution; however it is not found at the high school, according to Gerald Hatch, HHS U.S. government studies teacher.

"Each command has someone in charge of voter registration, and they help family members register to vote," he said. Families can register to vote by contacting their sponsor's unit or community voting officer.

Although the high school does not assist with voter registration, teachers are willing to point students in the right direction, Hatch said.

Some students said they have differing opinions about the upcoming elections.

Senior Cristy Milton said she does not plan on voting in the 2008 primary election. "It's too early and my vote won't get counted. I don't even know where to go to register," she said.

Another HHS senior, Romonno Washington, also plans on voting in the 2008 election but not the primary. "(Voting) is important to people my age because it makes us feel involved. As minors, we have a say in who we want to be the president," he said.

Washington also said he knows what he must do to make an informed decision.

"I'm going to have to research the front-runners because right now I don't know very much about their policies or ideas," he said.

Make your vote count; register now

By Dave Melancon
Herald-Post Staff

The 2008 election year officially kicks off Jan. 3 with the Iowa caucuses and New Hampshire's Presidential Primary taking place Jan. 8. Other states' primaries, many with bumped-up voting dates, follow right behind the Granite State.

Election Day, Nov. 4, is less than a year away. So there is no time like the present to register to vote, according to U.S. Army and Installation Command Europe's senior voting assistance officers.

"This year, we are electing a president and a vice-president," said Donald Wade, IMCOM Europe's senior voting assistance officer. "Voting becomes very important."

"Unit and U.S. Army Garrison voting assistance officers are handing out voter registration cards a lot earlier than in prior years," said Maj. Harry Turasz, U.S. Army Europe's chief voting assistance officer.

Unit and garrison voting assistance officers help Soldiers, family members, Department of Defense civilian employees, retirees and contractors register to vote, he explained. VAOs receive online training and attend workshops, led by Federal Voting Assistance Program's trainers, to learn about their duties. VAOs can also help identify a voter's county

of record back home and can assist with filling out the Federal Postcard Application.

If the VAO has difficulties with a voter's particular circumstances, he'll refer the voter to a legal office for assistance, Wade said.

While VAOs do everything they can to assist a voter, he will not influence a voter's ballot choices, Turasz said. "We are not supposed to show any favoritism toward any candidate."

VAOs can also help other U.S. citizens, who are not associated with the military, register as well, Wade added. "Any eligible U.S. citizen can register."

While the registration process varies from state to state, all 50 states and U.S. territories recognize and accept the postcard application — U.S. Government Printing Office Standard Form 76 — which can be obtained from a VAO or downloaded from the FVAP Web site, Turasz said.

"A voter fills out the FPCA and sends it into their county election office in the U.S.," he explained. "The FPCA registers the individual and requests an absentee ballot."

However, voters should check with their state's secretary of state or director of elections for state-specific laws and guidance, he said.

Once the application is filled out, it can be mailed postage free, and in some cases, faxed or e-mailed to the voter's state, county or other election officials.

"Every state is different with its voting registration procedures and with when the voter has to get the federal post card registration to their county registrar," Turasz said.

Links to the states' registrars can be found through the FVAP's Web site.

Lists of trained garrison VAOs are continuously updated and are maintained by the garrison directorates of human resources, Wade said.

Turasz said military telephone operators have updated lists and the telephone numbers of unit VAOs. Additionally, voting information and VAO contact information can be found via the USAREUR Personnel site, www.per.hqusareur.army.mil.

Registering to vote now helps ensure that an overseas voter's ballot is counted, Wade said.

"We should remember recent elections, where absentee ballots played a significant role in deciding the outcome," Wade said. "If we failed to vote, we allowed others to make the decision for us."

For more information, contact your unit or USAG VAO or visit the FVAP Web site at www.fvap.gov.

SCOUT

(from Page 1)

Nicholas' father, Sgt. 1st Class James Deans, antiterrorism officer, U.S. Army Garrison Heidelberg, is also the Scoutmaster of Troop 29. He had been in a meeting about the Holiday Magic celebration the same day, where the idea was brought up that the military community should do something for the German community.

"He jumped all over the idea when I brought it home," James said.

Not knowing what to expect, Nicholas spoke to the three orphanage directors, and got an enthusiastic response.

"First thing they said was, 'This is wonderful!'" he said.

The orphanages promised to give him a list of names, saying they had 67 kids. Nicholas started collecting toys and money in front of the Heidelberg commissary and Post Exchange with that target in mind.

He was assisted by eight of his fellow Scouts: Justin Leugers, Aaron St. John, Tyler DuBois, James Deans, John Bacot, Zuri Cabbagestalk, Joseph Barrow and Cristoph Nevins.

With a minimum of 21 merit badges and effort to pass through the other Scout ranks: Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star and Life, the Eagle project is among the last of many tasks, and one reason only 2 percent of all Scouts earn the rank of Eagle.

"An Eagle Scout project is run by the scout," James said. "It gives back to the community, but is there to evaluate the scout's leadership abilities."

"The scout doesn't do all the work, but develops the work plan, organizes and motivates the volunteers, and leads it through to completion."

Nicholas said the project was the most difficult scouting requirement by far.

"There was a lot of coordinating," Nicholas said.

With work underway, Nicholas got the list. However, there were 127 names on it, "So he had to start all over again," James said. "Then three days before he turned everything in, we got 11 more and five more the night of Holiday Magic."

"Giving up never crossed my mind," Nicholas said. "I think about what Christmas means to me. 'How do those orphans



Art McQueen

Nicholas Deans, 13, speaks about his Eagle Scout project at the Holiday Magic festivities on Patrick Henry Village Friday evening. Organizing time and assistance from his fellow scouts, Nicholas raised enough money to donate gifts to 143 children from three local orphanages.

feel with no family to spend it with ... It's all about cheerful service."

All the time spent totaled about 100 hours for Nicholas and about 200 hours for eight other scouts, he said.

"This was a hard project," James said. "But he didn't complain — every time we got a change he just said, 'We have to do this now,' he took it in stride and it became a labor of

love, rather than being just another requirement."

The group collected more than \$3,600, which worked out to 143 presents, enough for every resident of the three orphanages, plus another 143 very full stockings of American candy for each orphan, which filled all the tables at the Scout hut. Each orphanage also received sports equipment, board games and extra stuffed

animals things that groups could use.

On stage just before the Christmas tree lighting ceremony, Nicholas shook hands with the orphanage directors and explained his project to more than 150 garrison revelers.

When one of the orphanage leaders asked him his name, the director laughed and said, "Thank you, St. Nicholas."

MPS

(from Page 1)

"It was like playing 'Whack-a-Mole.' Insurgency would flame up in one area; we would go put it out, then it would flame up somewhere else and we would go put it out," Diaz said.

This process continued until the U.S. troop "surge" brought more coalition forces into the area.

"It was a giant turf war. There would be six to eight significant events a day in the area. There were bodies in the streets every day," Diaz said.

"The surge was 'crackdown time.' We rounded up all sorts of bad guys. The Iraqi police were very confident to do their jobs because they had all the coalition forces backing them up," Diaz said.

"Insurgents are not safe in this area," said Capt. Madhlum Abd Al Rahman Khodor, the Haswah police chief.

The Iraqi Police are evicting people who moved illegally into the homes of the Sunnis who fled in fear of the violence, Diaz said. They do this with the help of the Iskandariyah local police departments. "The IPs here are a lot better than they used to be. They operate independently now," said Diaz, who has worked alongside the Iskandariyah Police for more than 13 months.

The last few police academy classes have been heavy on Sunni graduates to even out the number of Sunni and Shia in the Iskandariyah District police force. Still, the Sunnis wear masks while on patrol to hide their identity for safety reasons.

"These masked IPs just started showing up in Iskandariyah. These IPs are legendary in the area the locals call them 'Masked People,'" Diaz said.

The reason these IPs are so effective is because of good leadership in Iskandariyah. "The (Iraqi police) commander is working very hard, so his IPs are working very hard," Diaz said.

The 127th's mission since arriving in Iskandariyah has been to train and support the Iraqi Police in the area so the local forces will be able to operate on their own once the coalition withdraws.

"We are here to make the IPs as independent as possible. One day we will be gone and they need to get by and succeed," Diaz said.

Members of the 127th meet with IP commanders in Iskandariyah often to discuss ways to improve the IP force. "It is amazing what these IPs do with what they have," Diaz said. "They just don't give up. They make the most out of what they have."



Sgt. Daniel Blottenberger

New Iraqi police officers demonstrate room-clearing techniques following their graduation ceremony at the Provincial Directorate of Police Headquarters in Baghdad Dec. 4.

MPs help train Iraqi Police

**By Sgt. Daniel D. Blottenberger
18th MP Brigade Public Affairs**

BAGHDAD – The Iraqi capital's top police officials and members of the Provincial Police Transitional Team led by U.S. Army Europe's 18th Military Police Brigade gathered at the Baghdad Provincial Directorate of Police Headquarters Academy here Dec. 4 to witness a new class of 707 Iraqi police officers graduate and perform a training demonstration.

"This is a proud day for Baghdad, for these new Iraqi police, and for all of Iraq," Maj. Gen. Al Mishtawi Kathim Hamid, commander of the Baghdad Provincial Directorate of Police, told the graduates.

"I am anxious to find out how many improvements there will be in the near future in

Baghdad because of this increase in Iraqi police forces," said the 18th's Maj. Larry Dewey, officer in charge of the PTT.

The ceremony included a demonstration of some of the many techniques the graduates learned during their four weeks of training at the academy. The demonstration consisted of combative techniques, building-clearing skills and defensive maneuvers against small-arms attacks.

"The demonstration and ceremony was extremely impressive," Dewey said. They have done so much in four weeks. "They have turned civilians into well-disciplined police."

The Iraqi police and the 18th continue their efforts to increase the number of recruits and train quality Iraqi police officers to improve the safety of Baghdad.

GATE

(from Page 1)

improvement to security," he said.

DPW manages the project, but the German Federal Construction Agency designed it and will be responsible for the construction, he explained.

During the project's first four months, most of the construction work will take place on the south side of the existing roadway, Roth said.

In-bound traffic will still be allowed to pass through the construction site, he said. Security guards will man an ID checkpoint. Construction crews and their equipment will have their own access gate and staging areas within the worksite, avoiding long check in lines at the temporary guard post.

"This optimizes the workflow and minimizes the disruption to the installation access process," Roth said. The new access point will meet current security standards.

"We will close down one lane of the road during each of the construction phases," Roth said. "There will always be a corridor open for in-bound traffic."

In-bound drivers will see little difference between the current and the one-lane check in that will be used during construction, he said. The same number of guards will be on duty and the current traffic flow will continue.

"Nothing will change," Roth said. "(Security personnel) will continue check the vehicles and IDs the same way they do now."

Outbound traffic will use the "Commissary Gate" to exit the installation. During the five-month long second phase, the security tents will move to the south side of the roadway, Roth continued.

Community members passing through the check-in will see the site's major buildings — the covered entrances and vehicle inspection points — going up.

There will be no work undertaken on the autobahn bridge, and there will be no changes to the Burger King parking lot, he said.

According to the German Federal architects, the new checkpoint will accommodate truck and passenger vehicle traffic. Other features include:

- ♦ Three covered in-bound traffic check points;
- ♦ Three covered vehicle inspection bays;
- ♦ A protected exit route for vehicles denied access to the installation;
- ♦ An "over watch" block house;
- ♦ Heavy duty fencing surrounding the entire site; and
- ♦ State-of-the-art security features such as camera systems and barriers.

The site will be able to operate around the clock, every day of the year, according to the design plan booklet.

In addition to the buildings, the project also includes new drainage ducts for the site and landscaping.

New sidewalks and bicycle ways will be constructed to ensure cyclists and pedestrians can safely enter the village.

Lessons learned from recently construction gates at the Heidelberg Hospital, Taylor and Funari Barracks in Mannheim and Campbell Barracks were incorporated into the PHV gate design, the agency said.

"It will result with a much safer access control point," Roth said.

"The processing time will be de-

creased because, instead of one in-bound lane, we will have three — tripling the throughput of traffic."

The project's major challenge is to install a large number of security devices and traffic flow features into a confined area immediately adjacent to the autobahn bridge combined with limiting disruption to the community, Roth said.

"Everyone will like the ACP after the work is done, but during the construction they may recognize some inconvenience."

The new gate will make residents safer for a number of reasons, said Lt. Col. Matthew J. Coulson, USAG Heidelberg director of emergency services.

"It will allow quicker ingress into the installation, as there will be more lanes to process individuals entering the installation," he said.

With a faster in-bound lane, there will be fewer traffic back-ups and less congestion on Grasweg.

The entrance will also have updated security systems that "will greatly improve force protection measures for the community," he said.

Kaiserslautern's 'strongest woman'

123-pound power lifting record holder returns to competition

by Christine June
USAG Kaiserslautern

Kaiserslautern's Debra Jackson is back, and to prove it, she lifted a total of 628 pounds (285 kilograms) to repeat as "strongest woman" Saturday at the Installation Management Command-Europe's Invitational Power Lifting Meet at the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center gym.

Jackson, 49, who was the oldest competitor in the event, took first place in the women's division 123-pound class and the Overall Female Lifter title.

She is a seven-time Amateur Athletic Union World Champion and has held the record for the dead-lift event of 385 lbs at a body weight of 121 lbs since 1999.

When she last competed in the Landstuhl event in 2004, Jackson also

grabbed the Overall Female Lifter title. She has been away from the world of power lifting for almost two years due to a shoulder injury in October 2005, and subsequent surgery in March 2006.

Her goal is to qualify for the U.S. National Women's Championships in the states in February, which will hopefully make her eligible for the 2009 power lifting world games in Taiwan.

"My plan is to always at every meet improve from the last meet," Jackson said. "I love the sport; I have great passion for it."

Competing in the squat, bench press and dead lift events at the Landstuhl meet were 12 lifters in seven weight classes.

In her second meet, Kaiserslautern's Maureen Materla took the female 148-pound (67.5 kg) weight class title and



Christine June

Kaiserslautern's Debra Jackson lifts 204 lbs (130 kg) in her third and final round of the dead-lift event Saturday.

had a combined lift of 540 lbs (245 kg). Maureen's husband Thomas Materla, who was competing in his first meet, placed second in the male 275-pound (125 kg) weight class, lifting a total of 1,223.6 lbs (555 kg).

Mannheim showcased two male

lifters. Lee Walker took second place in the 181-pound (82.5 kg) weight class, lifting a total of 705.5 lbs (320 kg). Garrison Pollard placed third in the 198-pound (90 kg) weight class with a combined total of 688.91 lbs (312.5 kg).

Wrestling, basketball seasons begin



Photos by Gene Knudsen

Leaning hard into his opponent Joe Craig tries to turn this 152-pound Patch wrestler on his back. Craig eventually pinned this opponent and the rest of his competition to become one of five Heidelberg wrestlers (Leon Tillman, 103 pounds; Jon Hoffman, 140 pounds; William Domko, 171 pounds; and Jordan Fackler, 275 pounds) to sweep through their weight groups for first place wins by scoring pins in each match. Sean Hipe at 189 pounds and Zach Smith wrestling in the 125-pound class also placed first in the meet. The Lions took the team title with 219 points. Other first place finishers for Heidelberg were Tillman, 103 pounds; Zach Smith, 125 pounds; Hoffman, 140 pounds; Domko, 171 pounds; Hipe, 189 pounds and Fackler, 275 pounds. The Lion grapplers travel to Ramstein High School Saturday for a six-team tournament.



Lady Bison Anaya Cook (22) drives to the basket during Friday's 51-23 home victory. Cook scored 13 points in the year's first game for Mannheim High School.



Zack Tapp-Wilson flies through a sea of purple Bison jerseys to score two points during the Dec. 5 face-off at Heidelberg High School. Courtney Wicks scored a game high 27 points for Mannheim while senior Chris Frazier tied with freshman Chris Cuthbert for Lion high point honors of 20 in the 88-48 home win.

community update

Darmstadt

Training

Army Community Service Classes - FRG Leadership Forum, Dec. 17, 11 a.m.- noon; Spouse Battlemind, Dec. 19, 2-3:30 p.m. DSN 348-6440, civilian 06151-69-6440.

Community

Mail Room Volunteers - The CMRs at Cambrai-Fritsch Kaserne and Kelly Barracks are looking for volunteers to assist with handling the holiday letters and packages. DSN 348-7411.

Kontakt Club - Upcoming events: Bensheim Christmas Market and Seussical the Musical in Heidelberg, Dec. 15, 6 p.m.; YMCA Christmas walk through the forest, Dec. 23, 5 p.m.; Christmas brunch, Dec. 25, 11 a.m.; Dining out at Karagoz, Dec. 28, 8 p.m.; Sri Lankan cooking class, Dec. 30, 1 p.m. DSN 348-1600, civilian 06151-69-1600.

Blood Drive - The 66th Military Intelligence Group will conduct a community-wide blood drive Dec. 14, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., at the Kelley Barracks Fitness Center. DSN 348-1550, civilian 06151-69-1550.

Angel Tree - Donate gifts to children and families in need during the holiday season. Pick up your angel from trees on Cambrai-Fritsch Kaserne at the Main Exchange or the chapel. Gifts needed by Dec. 14. DSN 348-1550, civilian 06151-69-1550.

Health Clinic Closure - The Darmstadt Health Clinic will be closed Dec. 24-25 and Dec. 31-Jan. 1.

Afghan Orphanage Project - Boy Scout Troop 65 is organizing a donation drive to help an orphanage in Kabul. To donate winter clothes, school supplies, hygiene items, sports items and toys for children ages 1-14, visit the Scout Hut, Building 4020, throughout December. *KabulOrpha@scouts65.org*.

Kaiserslautern

Training

Army Community Service Classes - Kids Connect Christmas Party, Dec. 15, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; Basic Training for Parents, Dec. 17, 11 a.m.; Managing your Assets, Dec. 18, 9 a.m.; Newcomer's Orientation Dec. 20-21; Kaiserslautern city Tour, Dec. 22, 9 a.m.; Euros and Cents, Dec. 26, 9 a.m.; Dress for Success/Interviewing Skills, Dec. 27, 1 p.m.; Smooth Move, Dec. 31, 1:30 p.m. Building 2925, Wing C, Pulaski Barracks. DSN 493-4203, civilian 0631-3406-4203.

Community

CPAC Closure - The Civilian Personnel Advisory Center on Pulaski Barracks will close at noon Dec. 14. DSN 489-7262, civilian 0631-536-7262.

School Parking Lot Closure - As a safety precaution, the staff parking lot and the entrance to the Kaiserslautern Elementary School area between the auditorium and the school is now blocked to traffic at the street 8-8:15 a.m., Monday to Friday.

CYS Teen Center - Holiday Dance with DJ Lark, Dec. 14, 7-11 p.m.; Teens on the Go Winter Program, Dec. 24 - Jan. 8. DSN 493-4516, civilian 0631-3406-4122.

SKIES Unlimited Christmas Dance Performance - Dec. 15, 12-1 p.m. and 3-4 p.m. at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center's Heaton Auditorium. DSN 486-8315, civilian 06371-86-8315.

American German Business Club Scholarship - Four individual €1,000 scholarships for German or Ameri-

can students studying business or business-related courses at the university level. Deadline: Dec. 31. Application details: *kaiserslautern@agbc.de*.

EEO counselors' recruitment - The Equal Employment Office on Pulaski Barracks is accepting applications from Department of Army civilians for EEO counselors until Dec. 28. DSN 493-4277.

AWANA - Meeting Dec. 16, 2-4 p.m., at the Youth Center on Ramstein Air Base. *dewlens@hotmail.com*.

American Legion Meeting - Post GR01 will hold a meeting Dec. 19, 6:30 p.m., in Building 368 on Rhine Ordnance Barracks. DSN 486-7516, *www.ktownamericanlegion.org*.

Heidelberg

Training

Army Community Service Classes - ACS will close at noon Dec. 19 for a holiday party. ESL for Beginners, Dec. 18, 9-11 a.m.; ESL for Intermediates, Dec. 19, 9-11 a.m.; Real Talk Teens, Dec. 19, 4-5 p.m.; Nurturing Parenting Class, Dec. 20, 1-4 p.m.; Bringing Baby Home, Dec. 18, 10 a.m.-noon; Daddy Boot Camp, Dec. 19, noon-1:30 p.m.; Adult Relationship Class, Dec. 19, 3-5 p.m. DSN 370-6883, civilian 06221-57-6883.

Red Cross Classes - Babysitters training, Dec. 28 and 29, cost: \$20. First aid with CPR /AED adult, infant and child CPR class, Jan. 12, 8 a.m.-5:30 p.m, cost:\$40. Register at the American Red Cross, Heidelberg Shopping Center, Building 3850, Room 263. DSN 370-1760, civilian 06221-57-8711.

New On-Site Graduate Degree Program - The University of Phoenix is currently enrolling students for a Master of Arts in education-teacher certification and Master of Business Administration. Classes start Jan. 30 and 31. Patton Education Center, DSN 373-7650, civilian 06221-588-0492.

Community

Angel Tree - You can help Soldiers and families this Christmas. Angel trees and drop boxes are located at the PX, ACS, PHV Library and the Community Bank on Campbell Barracks through Dec. 14. DSN 370-6883.

Polish Pottery Bingo - Heidelberg Sea Lions Swim Team is sponsoring bingo Dec. 14 at Heidelberg Middle School's multi-purpose room. Reusable cards are \$5 each or 5 for \$20. Games start at 6:30 p.m.

Retirement Ceremony - Dec. 14, 3 p.m., Roadside Theater on Patton Barracks. Individuals interested in participating, call DSN 373-7083/6102.

PowerZone Auction - Bid on a variety of electronic items and gift baskets at the Power Zone Dec. 15 at 1 p.m. Preview and registration is 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Mass in Spanish - Dec. 15, 6:30 p.m. at Mark Twain Village Chapel. Choir practice is at 5 p.m. Please join us for tamales dinner after mass. Civilian 06221-751859, evening; 0177-6748-775, daytime.

Blood Drive - Dec. 18, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., in the Casablanca Room, Building 31 on Campbell Barracks. All the blood collected goes to service members and their families. *www.militaryblood.dod.mil/CanIDonate*. DSN 370-5526, civilian 06221-57-5526.

Calling all HHS Graduates - Heidelberg High School graduates needed for a reception and graduate panel to enlighten current juniors and seniors with post-high

school experiences Dec. 19 at 1:30 p.m. RSVP by Dec. 14. DSN 370-8004, civilian 06221-57-8004, or *emily.gourdine@eu.dodea.edu*.

CPAC Closure - The Civilian Personnel Advisory Center will be closed Dec. 21 during the afternoon. For true emergencies, call 0162-271-1649.

Installation Pass Office closure - Dec. 24-26.

Recycling and Reuse Center Closure - Closed Dec. 24-26. Open 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Dec. 31.

Thrift Shop Closure - Closed Dec. 25 - Jan. 5. All consigned items that will expire during the closure must be withdrawn prior to closure.

HCSC Scholarship Competition - The Heidelberg Community and Spouses' Club annual scholarship applications are available at *www.hcsc-heidelberg.com*. There are three main categories: High School Senior Scholarship, Continuing Education Dependent Child Scholarship, and HCSC Member Continuing Education Scholarship. Deadline: Feb. 15. *scholarship@hcsc-heidelberg.com*.

HCSC January Luncheon - "Celebrate 60 Years of Friendship" with the Heidelberg Community and Spouses' Club and the German-American Women's Club Jan. 9 at the Village Pavilion 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. RSVP by Jan. 4: *reservations@hcsc-heidelberg.com*, 06221-739-1785.

Mannheim

Training

Army Community Service Classes - Stress Management, Dec. 14, 9-10 a.m.; Debt Management, Dec. 18, 9-11 a.m.; Job Information Class, Dec. 18, 10-11 a.m.; FRG information Exchange, Dec. 18, 6-8 p.m.; Smooth Move, Dec. 18, 1:30-2:30 p.m.; Resumix Workshop, Dec. 19, 10-11 a.m., Willkommen Teens, Dec. 19, 3-4 p.m.; Communication class, Dec. 21, 9-10 a.m. DSN 385-3101, civilian 0621-730-3101.

Community

Voting Assistance - The 2008 elections are fast approaching with some primaries less than 60 days from now. The USAG Mannheim senior voting assistance officer is Richard Calnon, DSN 385-2537. Federal Post Card Applications SF76 are available from your unit voting assistance officer.

Office Closures - The Finance Office within the Central Processing Facility and the USAG Mannheim Directorates of Public Works and Logistics will be closed Dec. 14 starting at noon.

AFTB Open House - Community members are invited to the Army Family Team Building Open House Dec. 20, 2-6 p.m., at ACS, Building 253 on Sullivan Barracks. Celebrate the 13th birthday of AFTB. DSN 385-3101, civilian 0621-730-3101.

Army Family Action Plan - AFAP needs volunteers to help identify and resolve concerns that affect the community. There are many roles you can fill to make that happen: Delegate, facilitator, recorder, transcriber or issues. Civilian 0621-730-2562.

CYS programs - Ultimate Journey, Dec. 14, 4-5 p.m.; Torch Club, Dec. 18, 4-5 p.m.; Keystone Club, Dec. 18, 4-5 p.m.; Project Learn, Dec. 19, 4-5 p.m.; Youth Action Council, Dec. 20, 4-5 p.m.; 4-H Club, Dec. 20, 2-3 p.m.; Cooking Club, Dec. 20, 4-5 p.m. Held at the Tennis Courts on BFV, Building 725. DSN 385-3550, civilian 0621-730-3550.

EMPLOYMENTopportunities

Darmstadt

The Employment Readiness Office is available to prepare family members for employment at their next duty stations. Located at the Army Community Services Building on Cambrai-Fritsch Kaserne and open Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 8:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. DSN 348-6440.

Kaiserslautern

Child and Youth Services seeks program assistants. Flexible schedules, training provided, scholarships may be

available based on availability. DSN 489-8305/7341, civilian 0631-536-8305/7341.

Heidelberg

The Heidelberg Thrift Shop has several job openings and is accepting applications. See manager for details.

Mannheim

ACS and ACAP seek employers to participate in the job fair, Jan. 26, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Sports Arena. DSN 385-3101, civilian 0621-730-3101, *birgit.thomas@eur.army.mil*.

Child Development Center is seeking program assistants. DSN 385-2849, civilian 0621-730-2849.

Mannheim Middle School, grades 6-8, is currently hiring substitute teachers. For more information or an application, contact Mannheim Middle School at DSN 380-9181, civilian 0621-730-9181, or visit the main office at the school.

ACAP is seeks a part-time/full-time counselor for the Mannheim ACAP Center to provide transition and job assistance counseling and conduct pre-separation briefings and job assistance training seminars. Master's degree in counseling, training, education or related field and minimum two years experience required. DSN 370-7505, civilian 06221-57-7505, *cathy.banks1@us.army.mil*.



Amy Buenning Sturm

The choirs and bands of Darmstadt School performed a selection of holiday tunes and other assorted music at their annual holiday concert Dec. 4.

Garrisons celebrate the season



Art McQueen

Santa and his helpers head out for an evening of caroling on Patrick Henry Village in Heidelberg during Holiday Magic. More than 100 people attended the event, which included a street fest, live entertainment and the lighting of the community tree.



Art McQueen

Children enjoy Holiday Magic in Heidelberg Friday evening.



Martin Greeson

Darmstadt garrison's final community tree lighting ceremony was held Dec. 6 on Cambrai-Fritsch Kaserne.

HOLIDAY safety

Trees

- ◆When purchasing an artificial tree, look for the label "Fire Resistant."
- ◆When purchasing a live tree, check for freshness. A fresh tree is green, needles are hard to pull from branches and when bent between your fingers, needles do not break. The trunk butt of a fresh tree is sticky with resin, and when tapped on the ground, the tree should not lose many needles.
- ◆When setting up a tree at home, place it away from fireplaces, radiators or portable heaters. Place the tree out of the way of traffic and do not block doorways.
- ◆Cut a few inches off the trunk of your tree to expose the fresh wood. This allows for better water absorption and will help to keep your tree from drying out and becoming a fire hazard.
- ◆Be sure to keep the stand filled with water, because heated rooms can dry live trees out rapidly.

Lights

- ◆Never use electric lights on a metallic tree. The tree can become charged with electricity from faulty lights, and a person touching a branch could be electrocuted.
- ◆Before using lights outdoors, check labels to be sure they have been certified for outdoor use. To hold lights in place, string them through hooks or insulated staples, not nails or tacks. Never pull or tug lights to remove them.
- ◆Check all tree lights - even if they are new - before hanging them on your tree. Make sure all the bulbs work and that there are no frayed wires, broken sockets or loose connections.
- ◆Plug all outdoor electric decorations into circuits with ground fault circuit interrupters to avoid potential shocks.
- ◆Turn off all lights when you go to bed or leave the house. The lights could short out and start a fire.

Decorations

- ◆Use only non-combustible or flame-resistant materials to trim a tree. Choose tinsel or artificial icicles of plastic or unleaded metals.
- ◆Never use burning candles on a tree or near other evergreens. Always use non-flammable holders, and place candles where they will not be knocked down.
- ◆In homes with small children, take special care to avoid decorations that are sharp or breakable, keep trimmings with small removable parts out of the reach of children to avoid them from swallowing or inhaling small pieces, and avoid trimmings that resemble candy or food that may tempt a young child.
- ◆Wear gloves to avoid eye and skin irritation while decorating with spun glass "angel hair." Follow container directions carefully to avoid lung irritation while decorating with artificial snow sprays.
- ◆Remove all wrapping papers, bags, paper, ribbons and bows from tree and fireplace areas after gifts are opened. These items can pose suffocation and choking hazards to a small child or can cause a fire if near flame.

SOURCE: American Academy of Pediatrics

leisure events

YOUTH PROGRAMS

Community-Wide Art Expo happening tonight

The Heidelberg Middle School Teen Program, with support from CYS School Age Services, the CYS Middle School Teen Program, SKIES Unlimited and the middle and high schools, is sponsoring a Community-Wide Art Expo at the Village Pavilion tonight from 6 p.m. until 9 p.m. See the artwork of children in the community as well as performances by a violinist, a flutist and gymnasts from SKIES Unlimited as well as a musical group from the high school.

Schedule of Events
6-7 p.m.: Judging of artwork
7-7:15 p.m.: Ribbon cutting ceremony
7:15-7:30 p.m.: Violin performance
7:35-7:40 p.m.: Gymnastic performance
7:40-7:55 p.m.: Flute performance
8-8:30 p.m.: High school musical group performance
8:30-8:40 p.m.: Guest speaker
8:40-9 p.m.: Awards and recognition

December 14

Ski Weekend in Soelden, Austria - Kaiserslautern Army Outdoor Recreation. DSN 489-7761, civilian 0631-536-7751.

A New Adventure: Shopping in France - The first stop will be at a farmer's market in Haguenau, where you will find a large selection of soaps, herbs, pastries and fresh produce. Then to Cora, a shopping center with French foods, cheeses and wine. In the afternoon, you will head to Soufflenheim and the many stores selling traditional Alsatian pottery. USO DSN 385-2082, civilian 0621-730-3468.

December 15

Santa's Story Hour - Visit Landstuhl Library, 10-11:30 a.m., to hear Santa read his favorite stories. DSN 486-7322, civilian 06371-86-7322.

Holidays Around the World - Enjoy a variety of holiday displays, food, activities and more at the Indoor Tennis Courts on Ben Franklin Village in Mannheim. Open to registered members of Youth Services, 12-3 p.m. On Dec. 17 and 18, the event is open to the community.

Ski Express Garmisch - Kaiserslautern Army Outdoor Recreation. DSN 489-7761, civilian 0631-536-7751.

Valkenburg, Netherlands, Caves and Aachen, Germany, Christmas Market - Kaiserslautern Army Outdoor Recreation. DSN 489-7761, civilian 0631-536-7751.

Caracalla Spa Day, Baden Baden - Kaiserslautern Army Outdoor Recreation. DSN 489-7761, civilian 0631-536-7751.

Strasbourg, France - Vist the Gothic cathedral and marvel at the astrological clock built in 1350. After a leisurely boat ride through the old district, plan to shop the wonderful Christmas Market (French style) surrounding the cathedral. USO DSN 385-2082, civilian 0621-730-3468.

December 16

Rüdesheim and Christmas Rhine Cruise - USO DSN 385-2082, civilian 0621-730-3468.

December 18

Happy Birthday Jesus Party - All children are invited to celebrate Jesus' birthday 4-6 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall at the Mark Twain Village Chapel in Heidelberg. There will be Christmas stories, crafts, games, cake and prizes. RSVP by Dec. 14: Civilian 06221-737-9814, dinabooboo@yahoo.com.

December 19

Swan Lake on Ice - Through Dec. 30 at the Alte Oper in Frankfurt. www.alteoper.de.

Advent Bingo - Head to the Kazabra Club on Vogelweh in Kaiserslautern, 7-10 p.m. DSN 489-7261, civilian 0631-536-7261.

December 22

One-Day Ski Trip to Engelberg, Switzerland - Spend one day skiing or snowboarding in the Swiss Alps with Mannheim Outdoor Recreation. Trip also takes place Dec. 29 and Jan. 1. DSN 381-7215.

Ski Trips Leaving from Kaiserslautern - Let Kaiserslautern Outdoor Recreation take you to Garmisch Germany or Interlaken or Grindewald in Switzerland. DSN 489-7761, civilian 0631-536-7751.

December 25

Ski Express Feldberg - Kaiserslautern Army Outdoor Recreation. DSN 489-7761, civilian 0631-536-7751.

December 28

Texas Hold 'Em Tournament - Landstuhl Community Club, registration at 6 p.m., first deal at 7 p.m. DSN 486-7244, civilian 06371-86-7244.

December 29

New Year's Ski and Party Weekend in Interlaken, Switzerland - Kaiserslautern Army Outdoor Recreation. DSN 489-7761, civilian 0631-536-7751.

New Year's in the City of Lights, Paris, France - Kaiserslautern Army Outdoor Recreation. DSN 489-7761, civilian 0631-536-7751.

Ski Express St. Anton, Austria - Kaiserslautern Army Outdoor Recreation. DSN 489-7761, civilian 0631-536-7751.

Caracalla Therme Baths - Enjoy the hot springs that bubble beneath Baden-Baden. The Caracalla Therme is a state-of-the-art thermal and sauna environment, where you can relax completely, far removed from the demands of daily life. Choose between the pool, sauna, solarium (tanning beds), inhalation or the aroma steam bath or try them all. USO DSN 385-2082, civilian 0621-730-3468.

December 30

Black Forest Winter Wonderland at the Waterfall - The holiday spirit is aglow in Triberg, the unofficial capital of cuckoo clocks. During the day enjoy a stroll through the city to the sound of live music. Dinner is served at the restaurant next to the waterfall. In the evening, more than 300,000 lights illuminate Germany's highest waterfall. USO DSN 385-2082, civilian 0621-730-3468.

December 31

New Year's Eve at the VP - Spend the evening at the Village Pavilion for dinner, champagne, live entertainment and breakfast. Formal attire required. Tickets: Single, \$70; couple, \$130. DSN 388-9423, civilian 06221-338-9423.

New Year's Bowling - The Darmstadt Bowling Center is offering a laid-back alternative to the traditional tuxedo and gown New Year's events. Reserve a lane for four or more people and for \$20, get unlimited bowling, shoe rental, a combo meal, champagne and party favors. Reserve by Dec. 28.

Rockin' Thru the Ages New Year's Eve Party - Families can enjoy unlimited bowling, music, food, champagne or punch and party favors at the Ben Franklin Village Bowling Center in Mannheim 8 p.m.-3 a.m. Come in costume as your favorite rock star. DSN 380-9528, civilian 0621-730-9528.

The Cove - Don't miss a laser show, a magician, dance music, alternative rock, food and party favors at The Cove's New Year's bash 8 p.m.-4 a.m. in Mannheim. DSN 385-2884, civilian 0621-730-2884.

'70s and '80s R&B New Year's Eve Party - Visit Mannheim's Top Hat Club for the hottest R&B tunes played by DJ Big Money, free breakfast, party favors and champagne. DSN 380-9370, civilian 0621-730-9370.

New Year's Eve at the Kazabra Club - 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Movies

Movies are subject to change by local theater without notice. For a recorded daily schedule, call the numbers listed below.

Patrick Henry Village, Heidelberg 06221-27-238

Dec. 13 - This Christmas (PG) 7 p.m.
Dec. 14 - The Golden Compass (PG-13) 6:30 p.m.; Elizabeth: The Golden Age (PG-13) 9:30 p.m.
Dec. 15 - Deck the Halls (PG) 11:30 a.m.; The Golden Compass (PG-13) 2 p.m.; Elizabeth: The Golden Age (PG-13) 7 p.m.
5 p.m.; We Own the Night (R) 9:30 p.m.
Dec. 16 - The Golden Compass (PG-13) 2 p.m.; The Heartbreak Kid (R) 5 p.m.
Dec. 17 - We Own the Night (R) 7 p.m.
Dec. 18 - The Golden Compass (PG-13) 7 p.m.
Dec. 19 - Elizabeth: The Golden Age (PG-13) 7 p.m.
Dec. 20 - The Heartbreak Kid (R) 7 p.m.

Schuh Theater, Mannheim 0621-730-1790

Dec. 13 - The Game Plan (PG) 7 p.m.
Dec. 14 - This Christmas (PG) 7 p.m.; Elizabeth: The Golden Age (PG-13) 9:30 p.m.
Dec. 15 - This Christmas (PG) 1:30 p.m.; Elizabeth: The Golden Age (PG-13) 4 p.m.; The Heartbreak Kid (R) 7 p.m.; We Own the Night (R) 10 p.m.
Dec. 16 - This Christmas (PG) 2 p.m.; Elizabeth: The Golden Age (PG-13) 4:30 p.m.; The Heartbreak Kid (R) 7:30 p.m.
Dec. 17 - We Own the Night (R) 7 p.m.
Dec. 18 - This Christmas (PG) 7 p.m.
Dec. 19 - The Heartbreak Kid (R) 7 p.m.
Dec. 20 - Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End (PG-13) 3:30 p.m.; Elizabeth: The Golden Age (PG-13) 7 p.m.

Cambrai, Darmstadt 06151-69-1790

Dec. 14 - Fred Claus (PG) 7 p.m.
Dec. 15 - We Own the Night (R) 7 p.m.
Dec. 16 - Elizabeth: The Golden Age (PG-13) 4 p.m.

Champagne greeting at entry, party favors, complimentary buffet, and a unique balloon drop. Kazabra Club on Vogelweh in Kaiserslautern. DSN 489-7261, civilian 0631-536-7261.

New Year's at the Irish Pub - 4 p.m.-2 a.m. Featuring karaoke and a raffle for a trip from Enjoy Tours. Armstrong's Club Irish Pub on Vogelweh in Kaiserslautern. DSN 489-6000, civilian 0631-354-9986.

New Year's in Paris - This tour includes a two-hour city bus tour. Then check into the four-star hotel and freshen up before heading to your five-course meal. The City of Lights sparkles as your boat cruises along the Seine River. Catch the fireworks from a location of your choice, and party into the night before returning to the hotel. USO DSN 385-2082, civilian 0621-730-3468.

Ongoing

Christmas with the Rat Pack - Through Dec. 16 at the Alte Oper in Frankfurt. www.alteoper.de.

Historical Christmas Exhibition - Through Jan. 6, the Kurpfälzisches Museum in Heidelberg will present a special Christmas exhibition covering the German Empire era from 1871-1918. You see typical Christmas gifts, tree decorations, religious items and many other antique originals from that period. The exhibit is in German and English. www.luxus-papier.de.

Seussical - See this family-friendly musical comedy through Jan. 20 at the Roadside Theater on Patton Barracks in Heidelberg. www.roadsidetheater.com.